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Grain Transportation Situation

United States Department of Agriculture
Office of Transportation
Washington, D.C. 20250
November 17, 1986

ORIGINAL

Commission Issues Order on Rail Contracts. The Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) served an order today in Ex Parte 387 Sub No. 959, Contract Rate Competitive Impact Report-Grain Shippers. The ICC has been ordered by Congress in language contained in the Conrail Privatization Act, to assess and report back to Congress the impact on competition among agricultural shippers of the variation between contract rates and single car tariff rates. This Act was signed by the President on October 21, 1986. The Commission is inviting comments from grain shippers and other interested parties. Replies are due at the Commission by December 19, 1986. The Commission's report is due to Congress by February 18, 1987. For further information please contact Michael E. Sullivan, the Interstate Commerce Commission, 202-275-7692.

Grain Harvest. Last week we reported that old crop corn in all positions was slightly over 2 billion bushels. This should have read: 4 billion bushels stored in all positions which includes 2 billion stored on-farm and 2 billion stored off-farm. It was also reported that lag time in filling car orders in the northern and central regions was 3 to 5 days. We have been informed by various sources that this lag time could be up to 2 weeks depending on location and railroad. There are reports that this length of time could turn around quickly based on a number of cancellations being made for unit trains.

Railroad Facts. The recent edition of the "Yearbook of Railroad Facts, 1986" released by the Association of American Railroads, contained some interesting facts. For example, total revenue carloadings of the major railroads dropped from 20,257,427 in 1984 to 19,418,382 in 1985 a decline of 4.1 percent. This decline was led by grain, down 241,842 cars or 17.1 percent. Metallic ores were down 123,050 cars or 14.5 percent and coal down 134,086 cars or 2.3 percent. Grain mill products declined by 16,000 cars or 3 percent. The drop in grain carloadings is attributed for the most part to a depressed export market. Piggyback carloadings on the other hand have continued to increase in 1985 with 2,862,626 revenue cars loaded compared to the 1984 total of 2,688,949 cars.

River Situation. At Locks and Dam 26, during the previous 24 hours, 12 tows with 125 barges have passed upbound and 9 tows with 125 barges downbound. This morning there were 2 tows waiting upbound and 1 down. At the Gulf on Thursday, 1,397 barges were waiting to unload grains, oilseeds, and products. Of that amount 536 were in the New Orleans area. The total of empty barges on hand was 664, which includes 342 in the New Orleans Harbor. At the Gulf in the New Orleans/Baton Rouge area last Friday, 8 vessels were reported loading grain, while 11 waited. In the Columbia River Basin, also on Friday 5 vessels were at berth loading, while 12 waited.

Note: We are now accepting subscription renewals for the "Grain Transportation Situation" report. If you would like to renew for 1987 please fill out the form on page 2. The editors would also like to reaffirm our committment to provide up-to-date and timely information on the grain transportation situation. This past year we had to discontinue barge statistics due to circumstances beyond our control. For 1987 we are currently negotiating with a new source for barge loading data that should be available around the first of the year. We are also planning to offer timely analyses of current transportation issues.

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To subscribe to the weekly "Grain Transportation Situation" report, January through December 1987, please return this form with your correct mailing address along with a check or money order (U.S. $) for $28.00 made out to USDA-NFC. We will not be issuing an invoice.

Send to: William L. Dunton
USDA-Office of Transportation
Room 1405 Auditors Building
Washington, DC 20250

Also, any comments or suggestions you may have on the report will be appreciated. _____

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GRAIN TRANSPORTATION

WEEK ENDED	1986	COMPARABLE WEEK 1985
INSPECTIONS FOR EXPORT (1,000 Bushels)		
Oct 16	68,755	72,871
Oct 23	79,300*	67,377
Oct 30	87,042	65,266
Nov 6	71,164	90,939
Calendar Year to Date	2,483,006	2,873,762
RAIL CARLOADINGS		
Oct 18	33,813	25,173
Oct 25	35,636	26,651
Nov 1	34,096	33,919
Nov 8	34,342	32,010
Calendar Year to Date	1,081,118*	1,011,053

*Revised

RAIL DELIVERIES TO PORTS (Carloads)

	North Atlantic	So. Atlantic & Gulf	Pacific Coast	North Atlantic	So. Atlantic & Gulf	Pacific Coast
Oct 15	392	4,315	1,877	1,593	2,185	1,838
Oct 22	1,466	5,560	2,748	2,058	2,465	2,677
Oct 29	1,962	6,189	2,568	3,127	2,055	1,843
Nov 5	1,642	5,923	2,368	3,474	2,787	3,601
CY to Date	35,775	142,290	83,071	60,703	128,352	113,013

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AVERAGE GRAIN PRICES ($ Per Bushel)

	WHEAT	CORN 1/	SOYBEANS 2/	WHEAT	CORN 1/	SOYBEANS 2/
Oct 3	2.59	1.58	4.81	3.04	2.37	5.12
Oct 10	2.55	1.46	4.65	3.07	2.33	5.06
Oct 17	2.61	1.44	4.66	3.13	2.26	5.04
Oct 24	2.63	1.48	4.76	3.24	2.25	5.07
Oct 31	2.64	1.58	4.86	3.29	2.30	5.09

(Wheat-#1 HRW - ORD., Kansas City; Corn #2 Yellow, Chicago; SB-#1 Yellow, Chicago)

1/ Bought to arrive 15 days.
2/ Bought to arrive 30 days.

MAJOR EXPORT SALES*
(1,000 Metric Tons)

WEEK ENDED		1986			1985		
		WHEAT	CORN	SOYBEANS	WHEAT	CORN	SOYBEANS
Oct	9	3,456	6,712	4,762	4,201	9,471	4,111
Oct	16	3,288	6,504	4,862	4,442	9,154	4,176
Oct	23	3,102	6,336	5,040	4,495	9,024	4,039
Oct	30	2,959	5,880	4,809	4,339	9,982	4,238
Nov	6	3,286	6,005	4,649	4,530	9,649	4,279

*Unshipped Balances-Current & Next Marketing Year

GULF COAST OCEAN GRAIN VESSELS

		IN PORT	LOADED 7 DAYS	DUE NEXT 10 DAYS	IN PORT	LOADED 7 DAYS	DUE NEXT 10 DAYS
Oct	17	40	53	68	40	44	62
Oct	24	37	51	62	42	49	65
Oct	31	36	50	59	51	34	65
Nov	7	28	47	66	40	53	68
Nov	14	28	52	71	37	48	66

COVERED HOPPER CAR OWNERSHIP
(1,000 Cars)

		RAILROADS COVERED HOPPER**	PRIVATE COVERED HOPPER**	RAILROADS COVERED HOPPER**	PRIVATE COVERED HOPPER**
Jul	1	121.0	112.3	123.3	114.3
Aug	1	121.3	112.8	123.8	115.3
Sep	1	121.7	113.8	123.3	115.2
Oct	1	122.9	114.4	123.2	115.2
Nov	1	122.9	114.3	122.2	115.6

**Jumbo Covered Hoppers Only

OCEAN FREIGHT RATES*
(Dollars/Ton - Basis Vessel Size/Ton)

U.S. Loading Port	Destination	Estimated Freight Rates	Dates of Movement
Gulf	Japan	$15.00-$9.35(27M-52M)	Nov-Dec
Gulf	Rotterdam/Antwerp Hamburg	$8.25-$6.80(45M-75M)	Nov-Dec
Gulf	Taiwan	$14.80-$9.00(30M-55M)	Nov-Dec
Great Lakes	Rotterdam/Antwerp Hamburg	$19.50-$16.00(16.5M-18M)	November
Pacific Northwest	Japan	$8.60-$7.35(40M-52M)	November
Pacific Northwest	Taiwan	$9.35(56M)	November
Gulf	Egypt	$23.00-$15.25(20M-30M)	November
Atlantic	Egypt	$14.25(30M)	November
Gulf	Portugal	$11.25-$7.30(25M-54M)	November

*These ocean fixtures are based on full ship charters.

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This report is prepared by Bill Dunton & Martha Bearer, Traffic Management Specialists, Domestic Division, Office of Transportation, 202/447-6793.

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